

The Cleveland
Museum of Art
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Egypt's
Dazzling Sun:
Amenhotep III
and His World
July 1 - September 20,
1992

July 7, 1992

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THE CLEVELAND MUSEUM OF ART PRESENTS
LYNN DAVIS: RECENT PHOTOGRAPHS OF EGYPT
July 24-October 4, 1992
Photography Gallery 105

As a complement to its 75th anniversary show *Egypt's Dazzling Sun: Amenhotep III and His World*, The Cleveland Museum of Art offers *Lynn Davis: Recent Photographs of Egypt*, an exhibition of seven large-scale photographs of the ancient monuments. To date, the best-known work of New York photographer Lynn Davis has been her 1986-89 series *Ice*, in which she transformed the imposing reality of Greenland's icebergs into pared-down compositions of simple formal beauty. In this subsequent project, she has shifted her square viewing frame from the stark landscape of the sub-arctic to the stark landscape of the Egyptian desert, and the results are just as compelling—sand, chiseled stone, shadows, and cloudless sky are rendered with balanced weight, as simply defined, abstract areas of consistent tone.

While she links her work to the past by using selenium toner to achieve the warmth of early prints such as those seen in the Museum's exhibition, *19th-Century Views of Egypt* (on view through September 6 in the prints & drawings galleries), this surface similarity only emphasizes how thoroughly modern Davis' photographs are in relation to those early documentary works. Davis' challenge in undertaking this project was to create original, fresh images of famous monuments that have been photographed, painted, and otherwise represented so often that their forms are instantly familiar to much of the viewing audience. Her approach is to tap directly into the power of the monuments themselves—there are no human figures provided for scale, no lush foliage or dramatic natural features to offset the elemental stone shapes. She finds a fundamental affinity with each monumental form, and at the same time expresses awe at the integrity of the ancient creative vision. This exhibition was organized by curator of contemporary art Tom Hinson.